



Arizona Substance Abuse Partnership  
Substance Abuse Epidemiology Work Group  
Meeting Minutes: December 12, 2007

## **Summary**

### *Epidemiology Work Group Members Present*

Jeanne Blackburn, Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families, Division for Substance Abuse Policy

Richard Porter, Chair, Arizona Department of Health Services

Wendy Wolfersteig, Arizona Prevention Resource Center, Arizona State University

Jeanne Brandner, Arizona Administrative Office of the Courts (via conference call)

Michelle Anderson, Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections

Phillip Stevenson, Arizona Criminal Justice Commission

Dennis Embry, PAXIS Institute

David Choate, Arizona State University (proxy for Charles Katz)

Emma Kibisu, Arizona Department of Health Services, Behavioral Health Services  
(proxy for Meena Shahi)

### *Guests*

Michael Shafer, Ph.D., Center for Applied Behavioral Health Policy

Leslie Mueller, Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families, Division for Substance Abuse Policy

**Call to Order** was made by Richard Porter at 1:42 p.m.

## **Welcome and Introductions**

- Richard Porter asked the attendees and guests present to introduce themselves and their respective agency/group.

## **Announcements**

- Phillip Stevenson updated the members on the status of the Arizona Youth Survey:
  - Approximately 280 schools have agreed to participate, with 73,296 enrolled students. Glendale and Peoria Unified have declined to participate in the 2008 Arizona Youth Survey due to concerns over potential liability.
    - Dennis Embry suggested the possibility of offering these school districts a waiver of criminal prosecution.
    - Phillip Stevenson indicated that the Arizona Department of Education will be contacted for advice on whether these school districts can be persuaded to participate.



- Dennis Embry announced that Flowing Wells School District has agreed to a PRIDE survey and an environmental check for the presence of drugs in and around the school in January 2008.
  - He also indicated that a future meeting of the Epi Work Group meeting could include a presentation on the methodology of the environmental drug testing procedure by the researchers conducting the tests or the test manufacturers.

### **Acceptance of Meeting Minutes**

- Richard Porter asked if anyone had any changes to the previous month's meeting minutes and asked if there was an approval of the meeting minutes. No member had any suggestions.
- Wendy Wolfersteig motioned that the meeting minutes be accepted; Michelle Anderson seconded the motion. When prompted, all members in attendance offered their acceptance of the motion. There were no dissenters. Meeting minutes were accepted.

### **Emerging Issues Subcommittee Update**

- Dennis Embry was in attendance and updated the group on the first meeting of the Emerging Issues subcommittee.
  - Dennis provided Epi Work Group members and guests with a summary report of the first meeting of the Emerging Issues subcommittee, including the group's focus and substance abuse indicators of interest.
    - Phillip Stevenson indicated the importance of discussing the data elements and determining the group's capability of obtaining the data.
    - Phillip also noted that while the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) data are sent to him by the Phoenix Police Department, he had concerns that rural areas would be unable to provide data on a consistent basis.
    - Phillip also suggested that an employee of the Arizona Department of Public Safety should sit as a member of the Substance Abuse Epidemiology Work Group in order to provide UCR data. He will forward me the individual's contact information.
    - As has been discussed in previous meetings, Phillip asked what role/function the Substance Abuse Epidemiology Work Group will have as the holder of substance abuse data for Arizona.

### **First Methamphetamine Quarterly Report Card**

- Jeanne Blackburn indicated to the group that she has the data from all data-holding members of the group, but has yet to have the time to compile the report. She indicated that this will be done before the next meeting.



## **Families F.I.R.S.T.**

- Dr. Michael Shafer presented on the Families F.I.R.S.T. program, a substance abuse treatment program for families in Arizona's child welfare system.
  - According to ARS § 8-881, the Arizona Department of Economic Security and the Arizona Department of Health jointly administer the Community Substance Abuse Treatment Fund in order to provide substance abuse treatment services to parents, guardians or custodians whose substance abuse problem is a deterrent to "maintaining, preserving or reunifying the family." Through this partnership, Arizona Families F.I.R.S.T. (Families in Recovery Succeeding Together – AFF) was created.
  - Dr. Shafer provided a PowerPoint presentation handout, which outlined the history of the program; Arizona Families F.I.R.S.T. providers; data collection methodology; substances reportedly used by Arizona Families F.I.R.S.T. clients within the 30 days prior to enrollment in the program; types of services provided to clients; service funding sources; case closure status; urinalysis results for clients with closed cases; limitations and challenges to the data and opportunities for further analyses, including a longitudinal study given the longevity and stability of the program.
    - The limitations and challenges included the lack of outcome data from children and their parents.
    - Future opportunities include potential survival analyses and geomapping of treatment and referrals made.
    - A question asked of Dr. Shafer was: of what population are these families a part (i.e., what is the larger DES population from which these families come)?
    - Dennis Embry asked what the group could do in terms of helping the Arizona Families F.I.R.S.T. program in its efforts; what this information tells us about trends.
      - Dr. Shafer responded that referral rates compared to overall DES cases could indicate regional self-referral differences, drug use trends and child welfare correlations, and program fidelity.
    - Dr. Shafer noted that the Center for Applied Behavioral Health Policy (CABHP) is waiting on re-unification data from DES.
    - Richard Porter mentioned that the Families F.I.R.S.T. data is one of the only datasets we have for an adult population that shows such high use of methamphetamine.
      - David Choate noted that the AARIN data indicate high methamphetamine use among the incarcerated population.
      - Jeanne Blackburn noted that the TEDS data indicate high use of methamphetamine among the treatment population.



- Dr. Shafer mentioned that these populations (i.e., populations involved with CPS and law enforcement) are more critical populations and therefore, introduce selection bias.
- Dennis Embry suggested that the group put together a policy briefing about the results across datasets.

## Resource Assessment 2008

- Dr. Wendy Wolfersteig will be responsible for the 2008 Resource Assessment (as she was for the resource assessment included in the 2005 and 2007 *Substance Abuse Epidemiology Profile*).
- Considerations for the 2008 Resource Assessment (and future assessments) include:
  - Should the Resource Assessment examine prevention or treatment resources (or both)?
  - Should agency or provider data be utilized?
  - Richard Porter noted that previous years' assessments were broader. He questioned whether we are now missing a piece of the data.
  - Wendy Wolfersteig recommended collecting resource data on prevention and treatment:
    - dollars, people, types of services
    - program effectiveness (although she noted that this may be difficult to address, it may be necessary)
  - Richard Porter noted that he would like to see provider mapping as part of the resource assessment (i.e., providers of treatment and prevention providers).
  - Richard also questioned whether a list of all Arizona prevention and treatment providers exists for the purposes of surveying these agencies about their services.
    - Phillip Stevenson mentioned a community information referral guide about which he had just received information.
      - Questions were raised about potential funding for this guide and how it could be used to gather information for the resource assessment (i.e., via snowball sample to ensure that information about resources not listed in the guide would be gathered).
      - Dennis Embry mentioned that with a time lag and GIS mapping, we can potentially see "footprints" using RE-AIM (<http://www.re-aim.org>).



- Phillip Stevenson noted that although these all sound like terrific projects, we may only be able to compile a roster of services because we must first begin with the fundamentals in order to have a strong foundation upon which to build future projects.
  - Many Work Group members agreed with Phillip.
- Wendy Wolfersteig will bring a previous survey that was asked of an agency to the next Substance Abuse Epidemiology Work Group meeting.
- Other group members will bring examples of questions to ask of agencies.
- Michelle Anderson noted that Meena Shahi is working on revamping the licensing definitions.

### **Work Group Chairmanship**

- The Epi Work Group was informed that Phillip Stevenson, Director of the Statistical Analysis Center of the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission, would be the chair of the Substance Abuse Epidemiology Work Group for the 2008 calendar year.
  - No member indicated any disagreement with the decision.
- Jeanne Blackburn asked the group if anyone had any suggestions for meeting times and days of the week for 2008.
  - Phillip Stevenson and Richard Porter noted that mid-week (i.e., Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday) work better for most people than do Mondays or Fridays.

### **Call to Public**

- No one from the public was in attendance.

**Adjournment of Meeting** was made by Richard Porter at 3:25 p.m.